suicide, especially in Vidarbha have duly taken note of and farm policy has been structured on the basis of a holistic approach; and

(c) whether any monitoring mechanism has been established for periodical study of efficacy of new farm policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Many of the programmes/schemes which are already under implementation by various Central Ministries and Departments and State Governments are in line with the provisions contained in the National Policy for Farmers, 2007. The initiatives and schemes recently launched by the Government of India, like the National Food Security Mission and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana and the schemes included in the Eleventh Plan, augment the current schemes and programmes facilitating operationalization of the National Policy for Farmers. Schemes like promoting self employment among agricultural graduates, creation of market infrastructure and krishi vigyan kendras providing training and skill development in different aspects and activities relating to agriculture and allied sectors are likely to attract and retain youth in farming and processing of farm products, apart from improving the income of the farmers.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir. Department of Agriculture and Cooperation has appropriate mechanism to monitor implementation of various programmes and schemes being implemented by the Department. Besides, the Agricultural Coordination Committee under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister oversees and coordinates the integrated implementation of the National Policy for Farmers, 2007.

Dry farming techniques

779. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps being taken to develop dry farming techniques in the country; and

(b) what new technologies are being developed to enhance dry farming in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA) located at Hyderabad with network project of All India Coordinated Research Project for Dryland Agriculture (AICRPDA) and All India Coordinated Research Project for Agrometeorology (AICRPAM) with 25 centres each located across the country are working on developing dry farming techniques to answer location specific problems. These centres are working on resource characterization, crops and cropping systems, rainwater management, soil health and nutrient management, alternate land use systems, energy management, and transfer of technology.

(b) > Integration of soil, crop and climate database for contingency crop planning has been attempted and decision support software has been developed.

> Popularization of agro-weather advisory services is being taken up at weekly interval.

> Small farm mechanization is being popularized through Custom Hiring Centres operated by local youth after their skill enhancement. This will provide employment opportunities for the youth and also reduce drudgery of women.

> Widespread deficiency of micronutrients is observed and soil analysis at regular intervals is being promoted to correct these deficiencies.

> Optimal use of natural resources spatially and temporarily for land use planning and development of infrastructure involving processing, value addition and market linkages is attempted using remote sensing, Geographic Information System and Indigenous Conservation Technology.

> Development of different commodity oriented Information Communication Technology enabled modules and capacity building of Self Help Groups and Community Based Organisations at cluster level are promoted.

> Technologies focused on rainwater management and livelihoods approach to watershed development.

> Energy management in dryland agriculture.

Agricultural growth rate

†780. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the rate of agricultural growth in the last five years;

(b) the current agricultural growth rate;

(c) whether it is a fact that India is an agri-based country;

(d) if so, the reasons for agricultural growth rate not advancing; and

(e) the target fixed by Government to increase agricultural growth rate in coming years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The growth rate in agriculture and allied sectors at constant (1999-2000) prices in the last five years as well as in the current year (2007-08) is given as under:

Growth Rate in Agriculture and allied sectors (at constant 1999-2000 prices)

Year	Annual Gorwth Rate in Agricutlure & allied sectors
2002-03	-7.2 (%)
2003-04	10.0 (%)
2004-05	0.0 (%)
2005-06	5.9 (%)
2006-07	3.8 (%)
2007-08 (Q.E.)	2.6 (%)

Source: Central Statistical Organization Q.E.: Quick Estimates

(c) and (d) The agriculture sector contributes about 18.5 per cent of country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 10.7 per cent of total exports during 2006-07. As per Census 2001, agriculture sector provides employment to around 58.2 per cent of the workforce. The

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.